

OLD FILE CASES ENDANGER RECORDS

City Hall Situation So Bad
Aid Is to Be Asked.

NO PROTECTION FROM FIRE

Valuable Documents Could Easily Go
Up in Smoke—Going to
Congress.

It is very likely that early in the next session of Congress an appropriation will be asked for to provide fireproof file cases for the preservation of the records of the Supreme Court of the District, and also the records of the office of the Recorder of Deeds.

The necessity for such provision has long been a matter of anxiety to court officials and attorneys. Several times, it is said, efforts have been made to have Congress make an appropriation sufficient to provide against such destruction of valuable papers, without result.

The matter has recently been taken up again, however, and there is hardly any doubt that it will be made a special subject of consideration at the next meeting of the Washington Board of Trade.

Old Wooden Boxes.

There are now a few wooden file cases being placed in the basement of that part of the City Hall used for storing away the records of matters in connection with the office of the clerk of the Supreme Court. The installation of the new files was necessitated by the fact that every available inch of space offered by the old cases is filled with documents.

The new as well as the old file cases are made of wood, and would, therefore, afford no protection in the case of fire. Application has been made to Congress frequently in the past for an appropriation to equip the record rooms in the City Hall with fireproof file cases, but the appropriation has not been forthcoming.

Valuable Records.

Though the records of the court are most important, the officials are obliged to store them away in unsafe cases. These records contain the proceedings of not only the court as now organized, but also those of the old circuit court, covering a period of more than a century.

These proceedings comprise 47,000 law cases, 25,000 equity cases, 25,000 criminal cases, 800 District court cases, 400 bankruptcy cases, about 1,000 lunacy cases, and all the records of the various courts in the District and of judgments made at law.

Possibly more important than all these are the real estate records which are in the office of the Recorder of Deeds in the west wing of the building.

Help Denied.

Soon after Recorder Dancy took charge of the office, he favored to have an appropriation made by Congress to defray the expense of placing fireproof file cases in his office for the protection of these valuable papers. He, too, however, was unsuccessful.

The wooden cases now in use are as dry as powder, and if a fire should break out it would be impossible to extinguish it before all or a large portion of the files were consumed.

The destruction of these files would be attended with great loss and inconvenience. The title to the property in the District would be thrown into confusion, and all the evidence of marriages would be destroyed.

The importance of having the court records kept in fireproof cases is appreciated by all the court officials and every member of the bar.

FIVE YEARS OF AGE; OUT UNTIL MIDNIGHT

Diminutive John Brown Is Taken From
the Streets to Board of Chil-
dren's Guardians.

John Brown, dusky-hued, diminutive, and five years of age, was turned over to the Board of Children's Guardians for one month by Judge O'Neal in the juvenile court yesterday. John was brought in by Policeman Adams, who picked him up on the White Lot.

The testimony of the policeman was to the effect that the aforesaid John, to wit, might be seen on the streets—where they are well lighted, for John is as black as the proverbial ace of spades—any night as late as 12 o'clock, and around the White Lot at late hours. He also had a habit of jumping on and off street cars. Every time the policeman had caught him the boy had refused to give his name. Friday night he was out late. Adams took him in after learning his name was Brown.

Johnnie appeared in court this morning carrying a baseball and an air of festive louchance. He seemed to know little of what was going on and to care less. His mother pleaded for him, but Judge O'Neal thought the best place for him was in care of the Board of Children's Guardians.

SIX PERSONS COMMITTED TO INSANE ASYLUM

The following named persons have been adjudged to be insane by a Master's jury, and committed to St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the Insane: Charles W. Jackson, Elizabeth A. Hall, Hattie B. Edwards, George C. Reiner, John Williams, Clement F. Wood.

Harry Elmer and Homer Reynolds, who have been treated at the hospital for a short time, were discharged as cured of their mental ailments.

In the case of Moses Solomon, the investigation relative to his mental condition was postponed.

The investigation was conducted by Attorney John M. George on behalf of the Commissioners.

FAINTED AND LIFTED LEUPOLDS' JEWELRY

BERLIN, Aug. 20.—The newspaper, "Volkblatt," reports that Commander Richard Leupold, of the Baltimore fire brigade, and his wife were recently the victims of a clever theft at Budapest. They were present at the military parade there and a young man who was standing near them suddenly fainted. Leupold and his wife aided in restoring the young man, only to find when he had departed that he took the fire chief's watch and chain and Mrs. Leupold's necklace, worth \$200, with him.

The youth who fainted is a well-known simulant.

REFERENCE GUIDE OF WASHINGTON FIRMS

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